granting of his request and he also feels offended if his prayers are unsuccessful, like the peasant of the well-known anecdote who went out to his fields during a hailstorm, grabbed a pole, and started to demolish the already damaged crop, shouting, "Come, Lord, let's see what the two of us can do!" 771

With the conversion of Prince Géza and the relentless missionary activity of his son, Saint Steven, and his successors, the original shamanism as the form of public worship was crushed. Nevertheless, the ancient religion continued to linger on and reports from the subsequent centuries, especially documents of witchcraft trials, indicate that among the people it still existed. Of course, this religion today is completely extinguished. However, many of its features survive in Christian practices (cf. the section on the annual ceremonies, Subparagraph 1h) and in customs which are today considered as more superstitious than religious proper. 756 771

After the reformation relations between the Christian denominations in Hungary have developed toward a close mutual understanding. Transylvania, the little Hungarian principality, was the first to codify freedom of conscience in Europe. In the course of the sixteenth and seventeenth and partly the eighteenth centuries in Hungary, the wars and rebellions always had a certain religious undertone although never to the extent experienced by Western Europe in the Wars of Religion during the same period. Later, the 798 ●

[See cat. 116, pp. 83-86 -- Analyst]

798 eventual frictions have been lessened and in our century they have disappeared so that, today, the defence against the onrush of materialistic propaganda is carried on by a virtually united religious front. Never, since the Crusades and the anti-Turkish wars, have the Magyars been so conscious of the conflict of the "righteous" and "godless" as today.

659 563 Between the two world wars, only the Christian churches enjoyed co-operation on the part of the State, while persons of Jewish faith were submitted to social and economic pressures. During the last years of World War II, this developed into a brutal persecution and deportation along the Nazi pattern.

659 871 After 1945, a separation of Church and State took place and, when the Communists took over the government, open hostilities broke out between them. Prior to that, 5,000 elementary and 120 high schools were denominational, mostly Catholic. These schools, along with all Church property were confiscated and entrusted to a "State Office for Church Affairs," decidedly hostile to any [661] kind of religion. Religious orders were disbanded and all but two of the 400 existing religious periodicals suppressed. Several hundred priests and pastors were deported and leaders of the churches (Primat Mindszenty, Archbishop Grösz, both Catholics, and Lutheran Bishop Ordas) were tried and condemned.

666 first of all there is a secret ballot in the cities. And then in some districts we are willing to risk a lot—we declare ourselves pro-government, and when we get to the committee we vote against the government.

642 In Austria, at the beginning of this period, the social democratics were in power. Many of the important Habsburg civil servants and army officers fled to Hungary, where the reactionary feudal régime gladly received them, paid them pensions and gave them important jobs.

The Horthy–Bethlen régime consisted of such people, of second and third generation Austrians (the descendants of the Metternich and Baron Bach Gestapo), of the landed aristocracy and the more backward elements of landless nobility, who always thought that the country ought to provide them with bread-and-butter jobs in the civil service.

• 798 661 The régime inaugurated systematic anti-Semitism. The Association of Awakening Magyars tortured Jews and conducted Streicher-like propaganda against them. The Bethlen set passed the first anti-Jewish law in Europe after the last war, when it introduced the "numerus clausus", making it practically impossible for Jews to attend the universities.

The Jewish question is a rather delicate one. Let us quote one of Károlyi's former Ministers, the Jew Oscar Jászi, at present Professor of Oberlin College, U.S.A., who was and is a radical liberal and has lived in exile since 1919.

> "This anti-Semitism [that of the Horthy–Bethlen régime] is very characteristic, as it is the only serious, strong moral reaction of the régime. And even this anti-Semitism is faked, as they want to get rid, not of the big mistakes of Jewry, but of that Western culture and liberty which these illiterates associate with Jewry.
>
> "By the way, for this unlimited anti-Semitism Jewry itself and the whole of Hungarian liberalism is also responsible. During the last twenty-five years [Jászi wrote in 1920] the Jewish question has become *taboo* in Hungary. . . . It was forbidden to criticise or warn the Jews. Anybody who, for instance, stated that there were more Jews in the leading positions of intellectual life than their percentage and their intellectual and moral value could justify; anybody who cared to analyse those harmful qualities which were evolved among the Jews during centuries of ghetto life; who tried to hint that while hundreds of thousands of land-workers were emigrating the invasion of foreign profiteers represented a danger to the simple

 * [the Horthy-Bethlen regime; 1920-1939 -- Analyst]

culture of the villages . . . such a man was attacked as an uncultured, rough, dangerous anti-Semite and life was soon made impossible for him."

The Horthy–Bethlen régime, writes Jászi,

"incited the mob to anti-Semitism, but at the same time the Jewish bank- and profiteer capital was growing freely, and the exploitation of the workers reached a record pitch. At the same time, this 'national and Christian' Hungary was again and again ready to serve Parisian Jewish finance."

Count Bethlen, the clever Count Bethlen, stopped open and official anti-Semitism. He stopped the White Terror of his friends. He did all this *after* the Allies gave political and financial support to the Horthy régime. He said that he could stop the White Terror only if the Allies helped the White Terrorists. And so the murderers of thousands of progressive people, labour leaders and Jews, were backed by American, British and French financiers in order to "consolidate" Hungary and establish a liberal parliamentary rule.

You saw what was meant by parliamentarianism during the Horthy–Bethlen régime. But we must tell you a bit more about Bethlen. In the country where 2,242 persons had more land than 4,000,000 of us, Count Bethlen said in Parliament in 1921:

"*In this State, where private property is sacred, to ask for land reform is like asking for my pants.*"

So much for Count Bethlen's democratic sentiments. In 1943 Bethlen sent envoys to neutral capitals, saying that he represented the only anti-Nazi force in Hungary. He wanted the Allies to set him up after the war as a great democratic politician.

In 1938 he wanted to prove to Hitler what a good pro-Nazi he was. He said:

"*Though the Hungarian Government (under Count Bethlen) was free to choose, it refused to join the Little Entente, thus rendering an invaluable service to Germany and making impossible the creation of a strong bloc antagonistic to Germany.*"

Well, this nice gentleman came to power by means of foreign loans, and fell from it when they stopped. But during the eleven years of his rule he laid the solid foundations of that policy which pushed the country of our lords into the war as accomplices of Hitler.

The democratic consolidation of the Bethlen régime was a very clever piece of work.

It was not anti-Semitic. The Jews were permitted to run

9: Eppstein S-4 (no date) 1045 EC1 Hungary EC1

burgs, was reconverted to Roman Catholicism; but Central Hungary, which was under the Turks, and Transylvania and the East, which were practically independent, resisted the 'Counter-Reformation'. Indeed, the Princes of Transylvania fought the battles of their co-religionists in West Hungary, and it was because neither party was strong enough to crush the other that toleration and equality between the main religions were established, first in Transylvania—the first country in Europe where this occurred—and later in the whole of Hungary. As the Habsburgs represented a foreign influence, Calvinism became linked with the idea of Magyar nationalism and Hungarian independence.

RELIGIOUS TOLERANCE. This distinction still exists, but politically and geographically Western and Northern Hungary are still overwhelmingly Catholic, while the plains of the Alföld are predominantly Calvinist: the chief Calvinist centre is Debreczen. In Transylvania, the Magyar population is partly Catholic, partly Calvinist, partly Unitarian.

Politically the Roman Catholics are still rather identified with the Habsburg cause, the Calvinists with the opposition to it. Socially, most of the great aristocratic families, except those of Transylvania, are Catholic, as are the peasants among whom they live, while the Calvinists are stronger among the 'gentry' and independent families. The old quarrels between the two Confessions have, however, died out. They live together in harmony and are on a footing of equality which is carefully preserved. The Protestants have perhaps in the

9: Eppstein S-4 (no date) 1945 EC1 Hungary EC1

last twenty-five years enjoyed a political influence out of proportion to their numbers, owing to the fact that the Regent and many of his special circle and advisers were Calvinists. Actually, in Trianon Hungary about 75 % of the population was Roman Catholic and 20 % Calvinist, and this represents roughly the proportion of the adherents of the two Confessions among the Magyars.

THE MINORITIES. A good many of the non-Magyars of Hungary are also Catholic or Calvinist; thus the Croats, most of the Slovaks and a fair proportion of the Germans are Roman Catholic.

But several of the non-Magyar peoples of Hungary belong to Churches which are distinctively theirs, or to which, at any rate, few Magyars belong. Nearly all the Ruthenes are Catholics of an Oriental Rite, or 'Uniates'. Of the Rumanians, some are Uniates, the remainder Orthodox; the Serbs are Orthodox. Many of the Germans are Lutherans. The only other important religion is the Jewish.

While the Uniate Church is a part of the Roman Catholic Church, the other Churches all enjoy almost complete autonomy, and thanks to the system of 'denominational education', which long prevailed extensively in Hungary, and still exists in large measure, the non-Magyars were able to exercise a degree of control over their own schools. This independence was, it is true, much reduced in the past fifty years, but it was certainly through their Churches that those non-Magyars who were neither Catholic nor Calvinist were able to preserve as much independence as they did. The non-

14: Evans S-3 (1950) 1953 EC1 Hungary EC1

when about half a dozen of us "padres" intruded on their work without a word of warning! When the interpreter informed them who we were, they exclaimed with joy the word "Peace." Wherever we went the people were thinking, speaking and praying for peace.

I visited the Hungarian House of Parliament and was delighted to see in their library of 260,000 volumes, including 10,000 theological books, one or two books from the pen of Dean Inge.

I lunched with Roman Catholic prelates and non-Roman bishops. They all testified to the freedom which religion enjoys in Hungary.

The overcrowded churches proved to us that there is new life in the people. I worshipped at the John Calvin Church in Budapest and heard Pastor Muraközi preach very powerfully on Jeremiah xviii, 1-8. The church seated about 1,500 and was full. The same evening I preached myself to a full church at Gödöllő.

At Debrecen we saw the famous Theological College that, according to the Basle *Nachrichten*, has been converted into a "Concentration Camp"! There were 172 students in residence and 18 were sitting their Entrance Examination that week.

There is no persecution of religion in Hungary. Roman Catholics and Jews worship freely, as they wish and where they wish. According to Canon Beresztóczy, the Roman Prelate who administers the See of Cardinal Mindszenty, five Roman Catholic Churches had been ordered to be built that month (September, 1951).

There is no persecution of science in Hungary. Professor József Varga, for instance, who was Professor of Science under the Horthy regime, is still Professor of Science under the present regime.

Throughout the entire country—and we motored hundreds of miles and spoke to dozens of people—I found full freedom to worship. Above all, I experienced an intense desire for peace. The motto of the people of Hungary may well be summed up in that adopted as a school motto at Gödöllő, namely, "A JÖVENDŐ A BÉKE EMBERÉÉ"—"The future belongs to the people of Peace."

The present pamphlet by the Rev. Stanley Evans sets out most vividly and compactly the position of the Churches in Hungary to-day. It is a masterly survey. I commend the work to the people of Britain and the English-speaking world.

W. Bryn Thomas,
Chairman of the British Hungarian Friendship Society

14: Evans S-3 (1950) 1953 EC1 Hungary EC1

HUNGARY'S CHURCHES TODAY

Of all the wild talk that has been bruited about to confuse the minds of the people of this country on the passage of events in the countries of Eastern Europe, none has been more wild than the picture of the coming to Hungary of an order of affairs in which the clock has been put back for the churches and instead of the freedom they previously enjoyed they are now being subjected to "religious persecution."

The truth is that, whereas there has been no age in which the flame of freedom has not burned in the breasts of the Hungarian people, there has also been, till now, no age in Hungary in which liberty has not been attacked and its defenders repressed. This is as true of ideas and defenders of religious freedom as it is true of ideas and defenders of freedom in general, and when the present situation is looked at in the light of the past the manifest advances it reflects can be clearly seen.

Conversion to Catholicism

Christianity came to Hungary in the tenth century, but it was during the reign of the first King of Hungary, Stephen (997-1038) later known as St. Stephen, that it was firmly planted in the country, partly by the rough arm of the civil power, with the result that on the death of Stephen there was a strong reversion to paganism. The first missionaries to Hungary had come from the Orthodox East, but a number of factors, particularly perhaps Stephen's alliance, through marriage, with the German Empire, led the country into the Western, Catholic, camp.

It is not possible in a brief pamphlet such as this to review the turbulent course of Hungarian history and the many setbacks the growth of Christianity received, chief among which were the Turkish invasions.

It flourished and grew despite them all and grew in a fundamental alliance with the State, the bishops, although at first foreigners, being nominated by the crown and never being averse to calling in the aid of the civil power to suppress the heresies that seemed perpetually to arise; the Cathari* in the twelfth century and the Waldenses† after them preparing the ground for the later Reformation. It was to deal with this situation that in 1228 the bishops called for the establishment of the Inquisition in Hungary, but it cannot be said ever to have gained a firm footing.

* A heresy which flourished in Northern Italy. It held that matter was evil.

† A movement originated by Peter Waldo of Lyons. It was anti-clerical and advocated apostolical simplicity.

795 From the very beginning of Christianity in Hungary no century
• 798 passed without major religious disputes and without the use of strong repressive measures. If in 1315 there were a large number of Waldenses, in 1415 there was a wide spreading of Hussite‡ teaching which was soon implemented by considerable Hussite emigrations from the adjacent Bohemia, and in 1444 a solemn contract was signed between King Vladislaus and Cardinal Julian for the extermination of the Hussites who were, however, saved by the death of both at the Battle of Varna fought against the Turks.

Reformation Struggles

It was in the following century that the major dispute began, the dispute between the strongly entrenched and rich Catholic Church in Hungary and the disintegration in its own ranks brought about by the forces of the Reformation which came to Hungary for a long time predominantly in their Lutheran form, although at a later stage it was the Calvinist element that was to predominate. The battle that began in 1521 with the condemnation of Luther's works by the Archbishop of Grau assumed many different forms in the next three centuries, and if it seemed in 1530, when the Queen and her Chaplain went to the Diet of Augsburg, that Protestantism was going to win, yet the main feature of much of the subsequent history was the expropriation of Protestant buildings and the physical torture, imprisonment and often death, of the Protestant clergy, a persecution which often produced strong feeling in other countries, as is shown by a pamphlet, *A Brief Narrative of the State of Protestants in Hungary*, published in London in 1677. This pamphlet reports the famous occasion when Protestant Ministers were summoned by the civil authorities to Pressburg and there required to lay down their employment and leave the kingdom or else to become Catholics. Those who refused were then condemned by judges, who included bishops, to sentence of death and loss of property. In fact those who stood fast, predominantly the Calvinists, were fettered, transported to Italy and sold for the forced labour of the galleys, from which they were eventually saved by an ably conducted cutting-out expedition led by the Dutch Admiral de Ruyter.

Despite all persecution, however, Protestantism grew and flourished, the Bible was translated into Hungarian and increasing freedom was won, although full equality with the Catholics had not been achieved even by the time of the opening of the second world war. The Calvinists particularly had made an outstanding contribution to Hungarian history which is symbolised, perhaps, by the use of their college at Debrecen for the first meeting of the first Hungarian National Assembly in 1848.

‡ Hus in Bohemia owed much to Wyclif in England. The views of both were of the same type as those of Waldo.

6: Shuster S-4 (no date) 1954 El Europe
HUNGARY EC1

when he went to pay his respects at the bier of one who in the eyes of the Catholic Church had sinned grievously by committing suicide, provided one of the most dramatic moments in the history of opposition to Nazism. The Hungarian Army did what it was ordered to do. It fought with valor on the Eastern front and suffered heavy losses. We should not fail to respect its bravery and its sacrifices. One of the erroneous assumptions in recent historical writing is that good soldiers should pause on the eve of battle to decide by caucus whether what they are about to do is above reproach from every moral point of view. That is surely the proper business of the government that orders them to take the field.

During the period of Nazi domination, the Catholic Church fought with energy and charity to mitigate the persecution of the Jews. Numerous tributes have been paid to it for that reason. Cardinal Serédi stated the position of the Papacy on this question with eloquent courage. He was followed in office by Joseph, Cardinal Mindszenty, destined to become one whom the world would look upon as a martyr. The Church saved thousands of Jews from deportation to concentration camps, frequently hiding them in the rooms of convents and monasteries or spiriting them across the border, so that a substantial Hungarian Jewish minority survived. The pro-Nazi Party, known as Arrow and Cross, was shunned by every faithful Christian. In like manner the Church had assisted Polish soldiers who had been forced to flee after the defeat of the armies in which they served.*

When in 1944 the defeat of Hitler was foreshadowed by

* I shall not forget the Polish officer to whom, one fall afternoon in 1945, I gave a lift. As we drove from the outskirts of Naples to Rome, past the ruins of Monte Cassino, he told about the cemetery on the battle-scarred heights above the town, in which rest 1,200 soldiers of the Polish brigade who died in the attack. He was doomed not to return to his homeland. Gratefully he recalled the hospitality which had been accorded to him in a Hungarian convent.

6: Shuster S-4 (no date) 1954 El Europe
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Germans. Later he denounced quite as vigorously the expulsion of German-speaking minority groups from Hungary. However, as soon as the treaty went into effect, the Cardinal and the Church were left to face the enemy unaided. It had been argued that he should have anticipated the development and adopted a more conciliatory tone; but the evidence garnered in other satellite countries shows that he would merely have made his own lot easier without changing in the least the direction in which the Communist Party was implacably moving.

The first effect of the treaty on religious activities was the subjugation of the Calvinist and Lutheran churches. Lutheran ranks had been seriously depleted by the expulsion of German "ethnic" groups. During the autumn of 1948 Bishop Lajos Ordass, undoubtedly the ablest and most courageous Lutheran leader, was brought to trial and sentenced to two years in prison. The Calvinists, on the other hand, were led intellectually by Dr. Albert Bereczky, who seemingly assented to every demand made by the State. Soon this Hungarian Protestant church heard Bishop Imre Ravecz say that "the most important and significant ordinances of the Hungarian form of society are in complete accord with Holy Writ." These developments were interpreted in some quarters as meaning that whereas the Protestant churches enjoyed complete freedom under Communist rule, the recalcitrant Catholic Church was having a difficult time because of the bigotry and lust for power which characterized its Hierarchy.

As a matter of fact, the Calvinist Church in particular was feeling the knout, not merely in outward persecution but also in inner conflict. Prior to the signing of the treaty and the Communist seizure of the government the dominant group in it was the one that had opposed the Nazis. These men, notably Bereczky, were persuaded that the traditional interdependence